

The Transparent Classroom

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The idea behind the transparent classroom is to leverage Web 2.0 tools to communicate with students and fellow faculty.

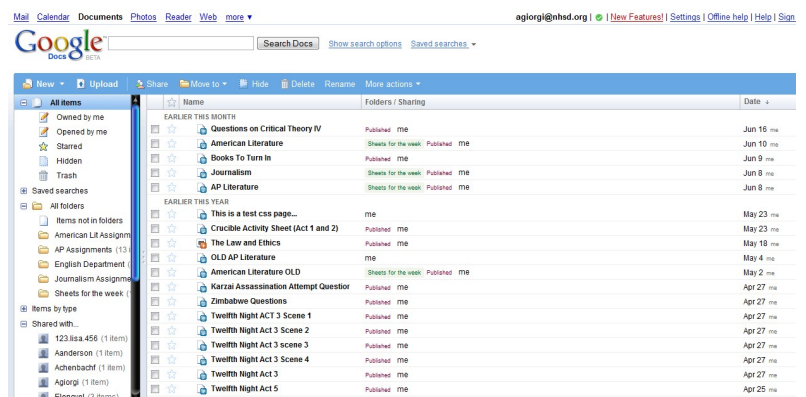
This tutorial will introduce ways to use three "cloud computing" tools to accomplish this goal: Google Docs & Spreadsheets, Windows Live SkyDrive, and a new technology designed for devices called Live Mesh.



Google Documents: Sharing and Publishing

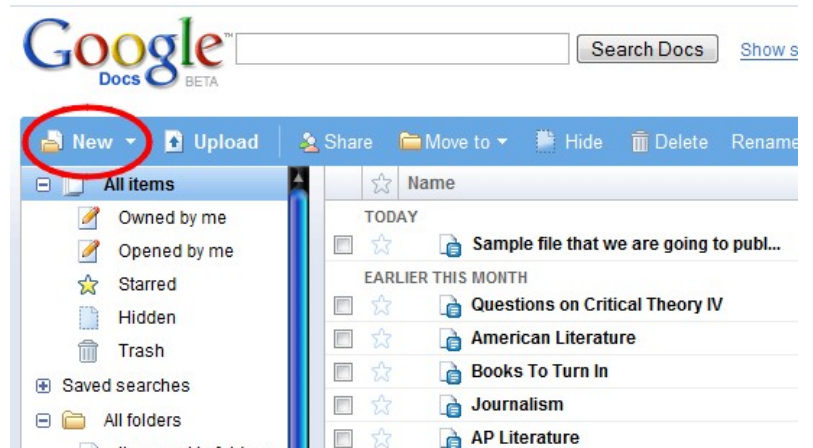
One easy way of communicating with students and other staff is to use the sharing and publishing features of Google Docs.

We are going to first look at the publishing features and then move on to the sharing features.



1. Create (or import) the file in Google Docs

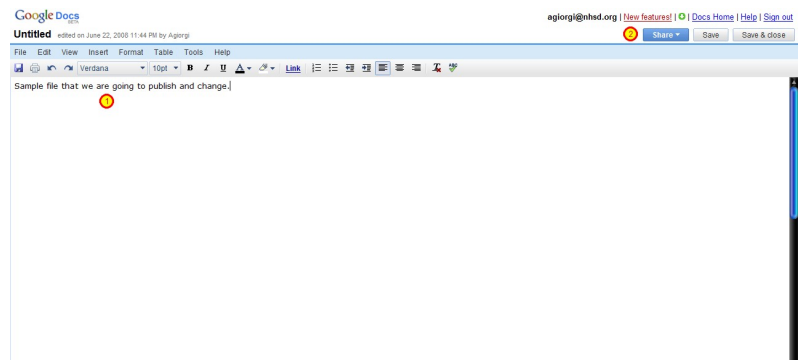
The first thing we have to do is to create the file in Google Docs. This is accomplished by clicking on the "New" button and selection the application we want (Docs, Sheets, Presentations).



2. Prepare the File

1. Prepare the File as you would like to. In this example we just have one line of text since we are going to change it.

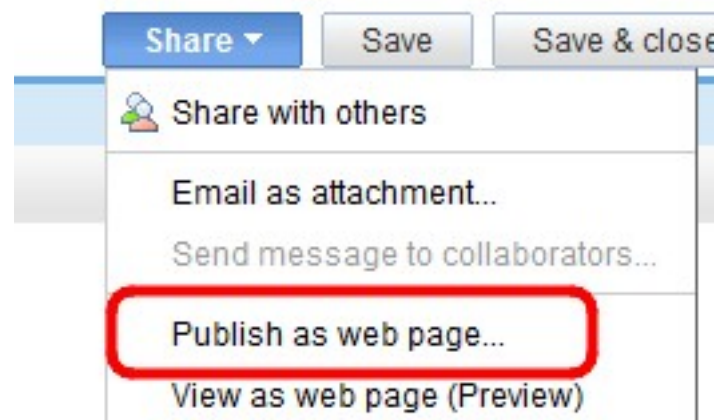
2. After we are finished with the text, we are going to click on the "Share" button



3. The Share Button

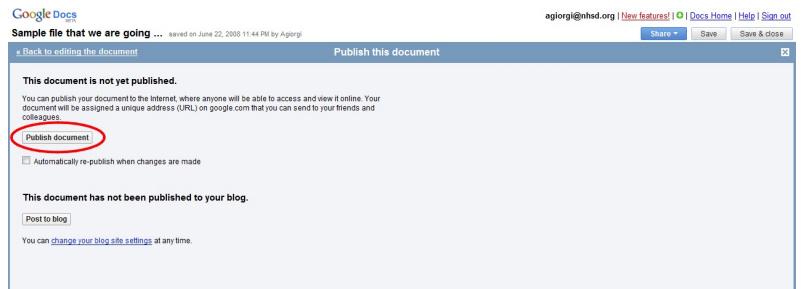
The Share button allows you to share with others (what we will do next), Email the file as an attachment (which we won't do), and Publish as a Web Page (Which we are going to do).

Click on "Publish as a web page"



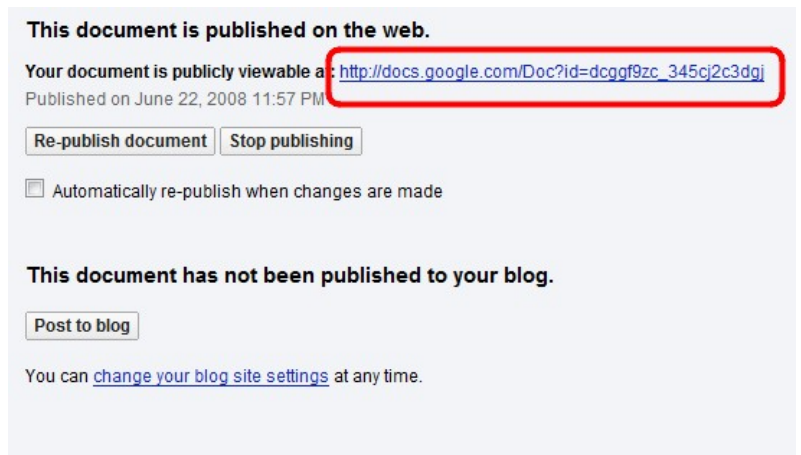
4. One-Click Publishing

To publish the document on the web, click on "Publish Document." Google will automatically create a web address where you can go and see your document in any web browser.



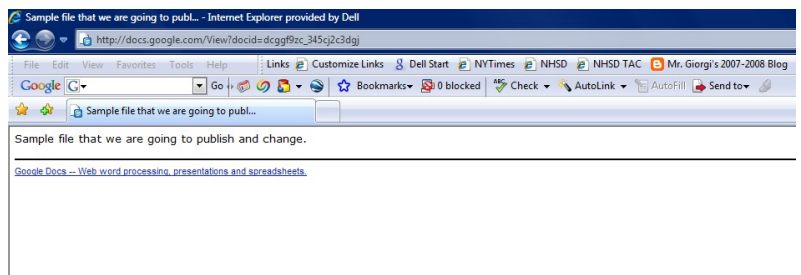
5. Document URL

After we click the button, our document is published and our URL (website address) is live.



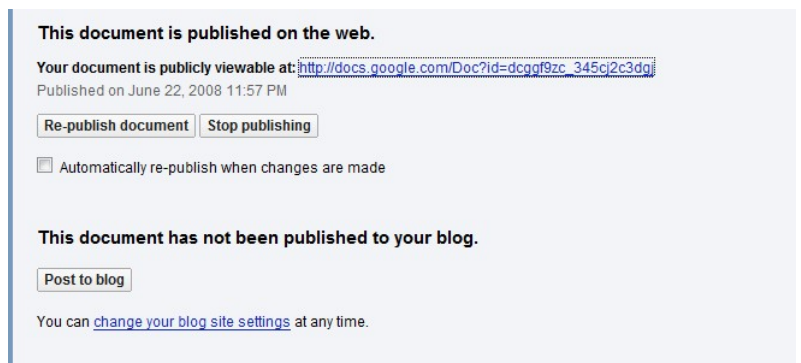
6. View the Web Page

This is the web page as it is published in Google's "Cloud."



Antoher way to share the file: Post it to your Blog

Click the "Post to Blog" button to send it to your blog.



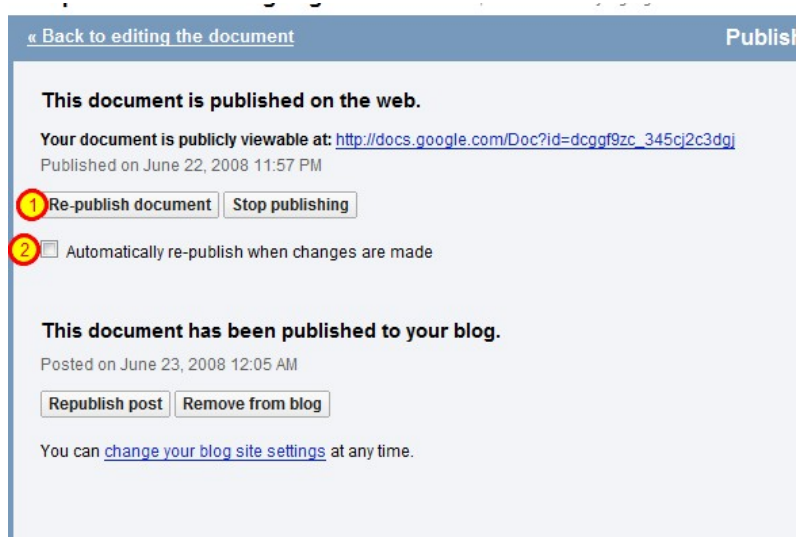
Results of Posting to your Blog

1. The result of posting it to my blog (mrgiorgi.blogspot.com) is a new blog entry.
2. This is OK, but I prefer to have a link to that web page view you saw earlier. In a minute you will see why. Notice my list of links (many are schedules I update all the time).



Publishing everytime you make a revision...

1. This button allows you to re-publish the document whenever you want.
2. This check box will automatically republish the document every time you make a change.



Ready to Publish

Once checked, you are ready to update continuously without every having to think about transmitting the information to the students ever again. If you are using the link on the Teacher Page or on a blog you have set up or another site (anything will do), it will always be current.

The next steps will show you examples of changes as they take place.

This document is published on the web.

Your document is publicly viewable at: http://docs.google.com/Doc?id=dcgf9zc_345cj2c3dgj

Published on June 23, 2008 12:11 AM

[Re-publish document](#)

[Stop publishing](#)

☒ Automatically re-publish when changes are made

This document has been published to your blog.

Posted on June 23, 2008 12:05 AM

[Republish post](#)

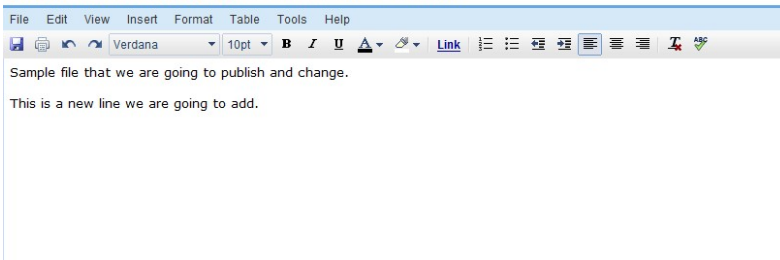
[Remove from blog](#)

You can [change your blog site settings](#) at any time.

Adding new information

Here we are adding a new line. The information has changed, but we haven't gone back to our blog or website to post the url (we already did that when we first published it). Remember that we used to have one line of text.

Sample file that we are going ... saved on June 22, 2008 11:46 PM by Agiorgi

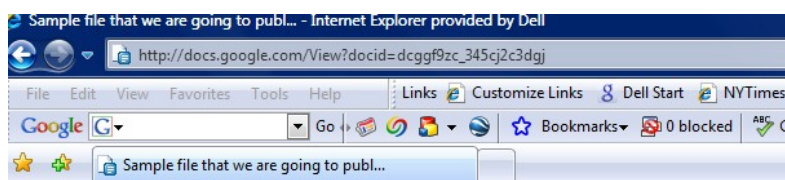


Automatic updating

Our web page automatically updates without being told since we have told it to re-publish automatically each time a change is made.

This is an example of how you could use publishing on an ongoing basis. Google Docs is also great for publishing static assignments, but it is also ideal for flexible assignments and projects as well as class schedules.

See the Google Docs--Basics manual to look at sharing documents with another individual or small group. You will also see the spreadsheet and presentation applications.



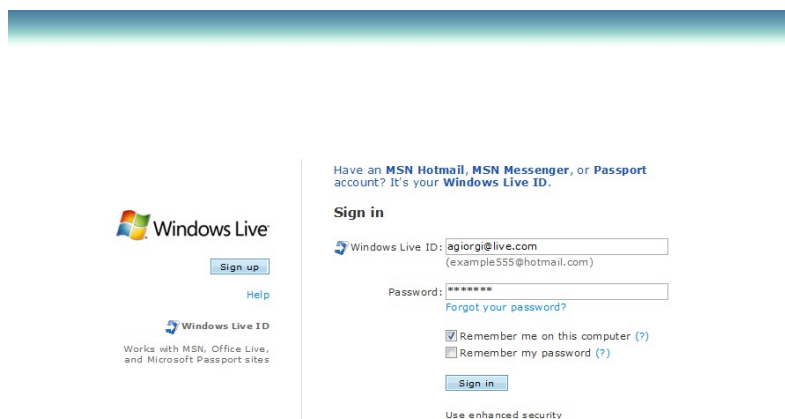
Sample file that we are going to publish and change.

This is a new line we are going to add.

[Google Docs -- Web word processing, presentations and spreadsheets.](#)

SkyDrive: Microsoft's Cloud

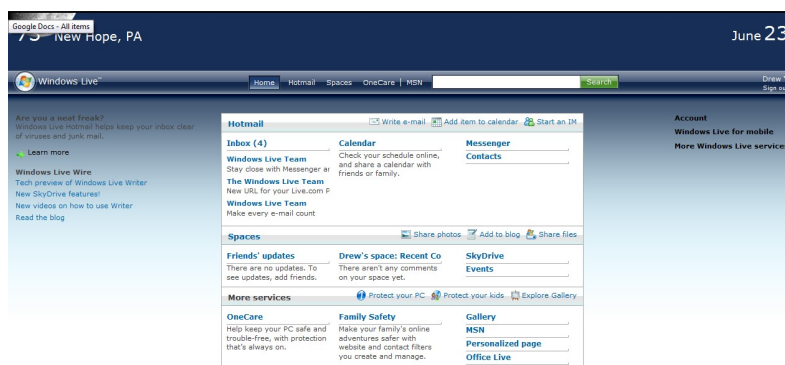
Sign in with any account you have: MSN, Hotmail, or Windows Live (I'm using a live.com account in this example).



Windows Live: Home Screen

Simply put: Windows Live is Microsoft's all out attempt to provide every web service under the sun. There is a lot more available here than email, but there is one big problem: *No one knows that it is there...*

For the purposes of this tutorial, we are only using SkyDrive..

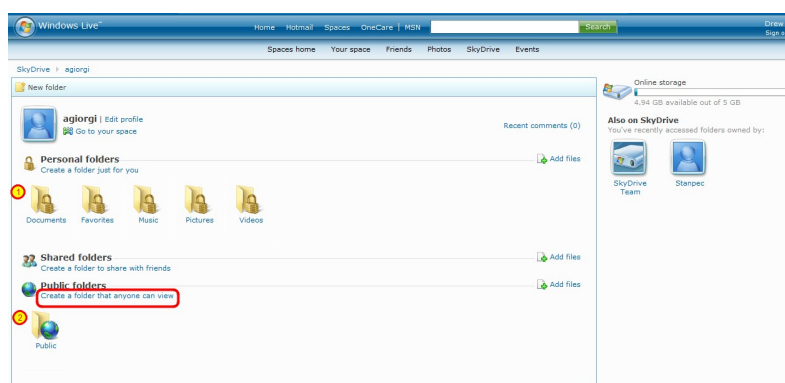


Two Places: Public and Private (Secure)

SkyDrive gives you 5 gigabytes of free storage. That is a sizable amount as long as you are not working with large video files.

1. If you want a place to store your files (and this could be any file type not just Office files like we saw with Google Docs), this is your place

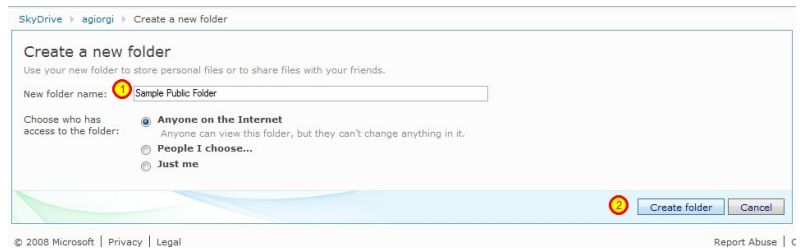
2. If you want to use a folder you can share publicly so that students can get to the files, use the public folders.



Click one of the links to create a folder.
We are going to do so with the "public"
link.

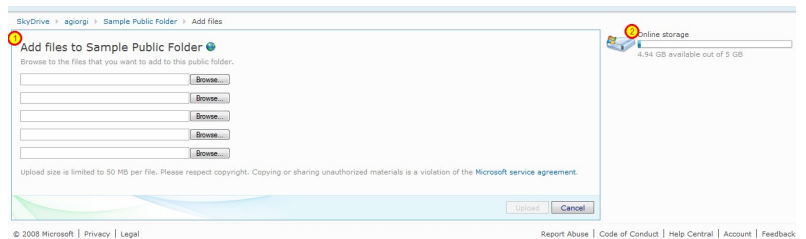
Create a Folder

Once you have given the new folder a name (1), click on the "create folder" button(2).



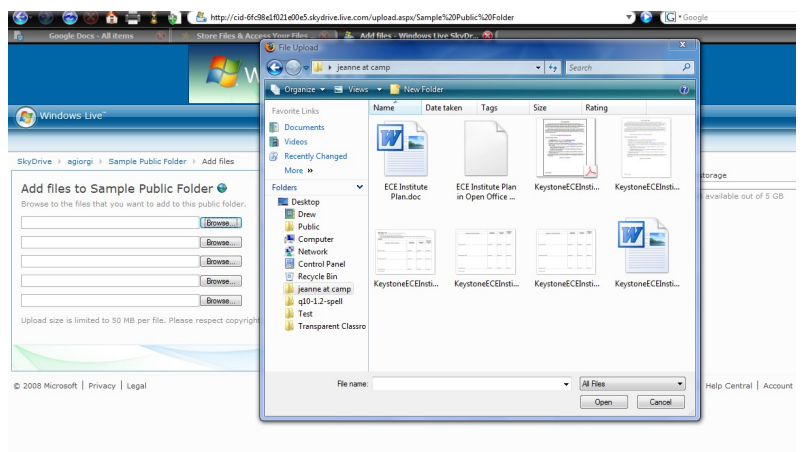
Add Files

1. Once created, the system will prompt you to add files.
2. There is a meter that will allow you to monitor your storage usage.



Browse for files

Click browse and select the file you want. In this case, we will select a Word document.



Upload complete

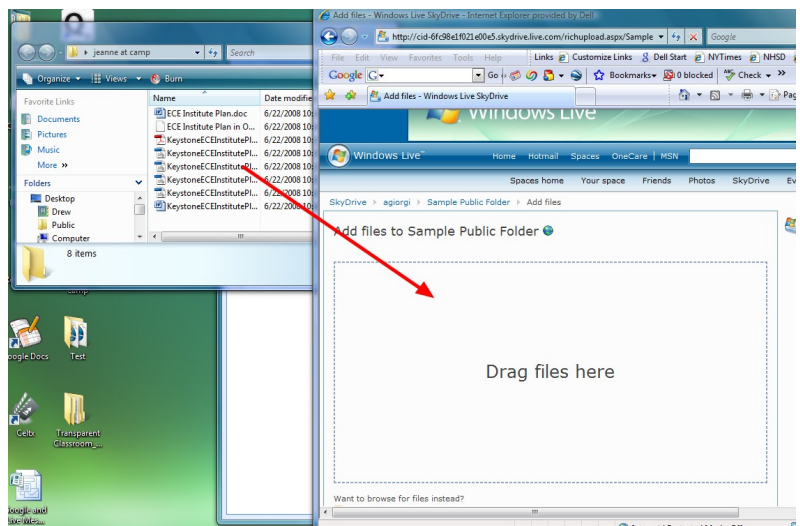
Once you have one file uploaded, the folder will display it. You can do anyone of the following:

1. Add Files
2. Create another folder within this folder
3. Send a link to this folder via email
4. Embed a link to this folder in an html document
5. Change the folder options (permissions)
6. Change the view (between ICON view and DETAILS view)



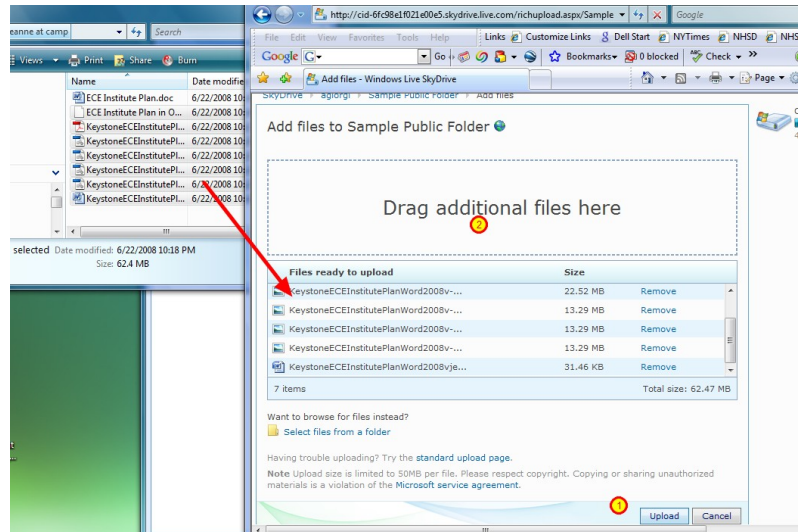
Add Files using the Drag and Drop Tool

If you are using Internet Explorer at home and you install the active X plugin for SkyDrive (the program will prompt you to do this your first time uploading files, you get to say "yes" or "no"), you can drag and drop a whole group of files at once.



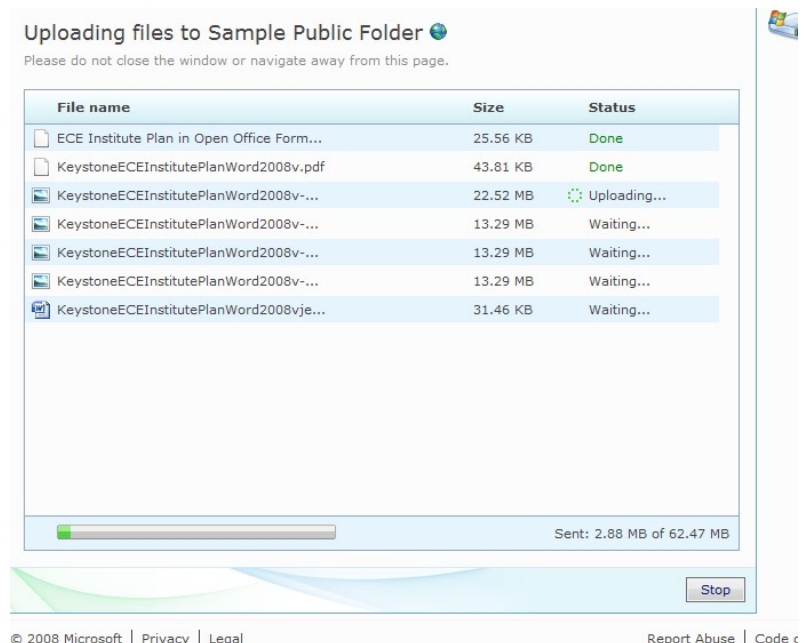
As Easy as Dragging and Dropping on your desktop

1. Once you have dumped all your files into the target area you can hit upload.
2. In addition, if you want to drop in files from different folders located all over your system, you can use the "drag additional files here" square.



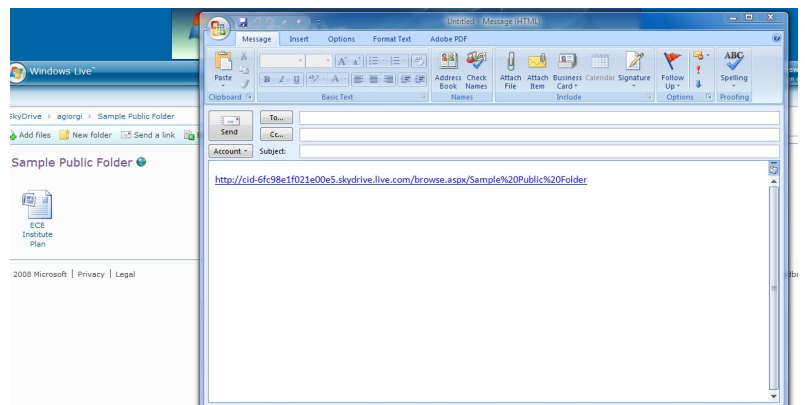
Upload Time

Depends on your connection!, but the system lets you see what is being sent and what is waiting in line.



Send a Link

The "Send a Link" activates your email and adds a link that is ready to be sent.

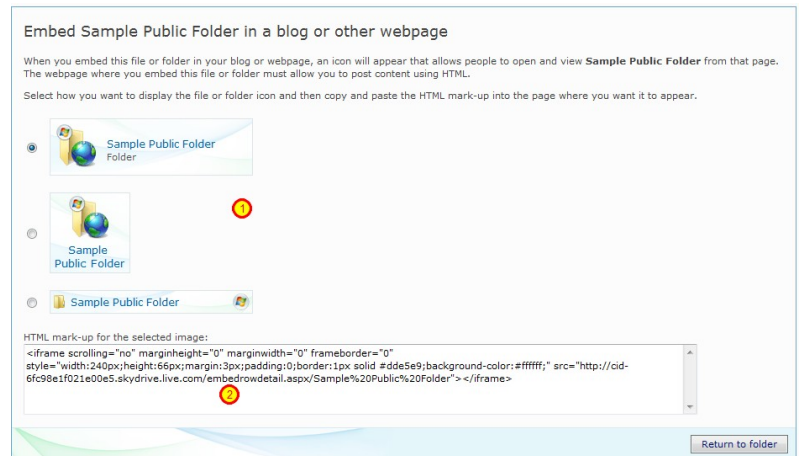


Embedding a Folder

If you are using Blogger, another tool that accepts html, or are writing your own web page, you can use the "embed" feature to put a link on the page with a folder icon.

1. Select the folder icon
2. Copy the html
3. paste it into the target html document.

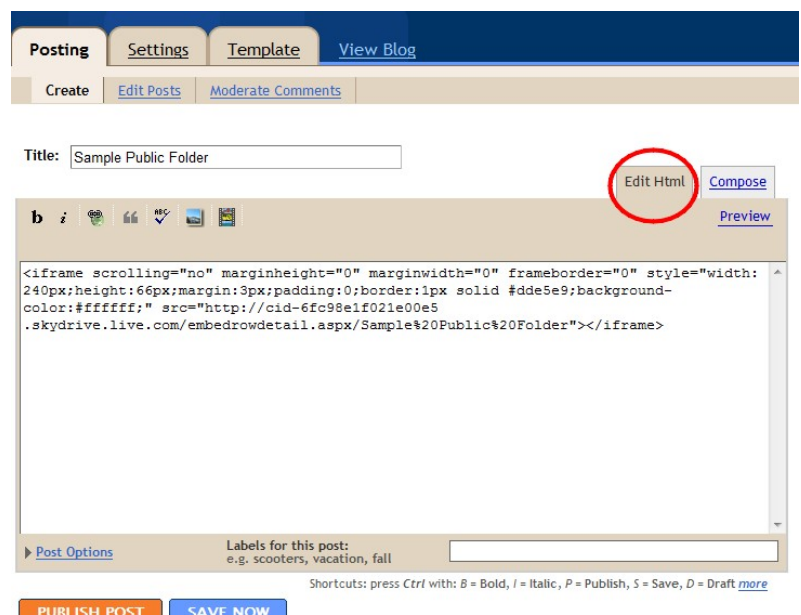
The next steps will show you how it is done using Blogger.



Pasting the code

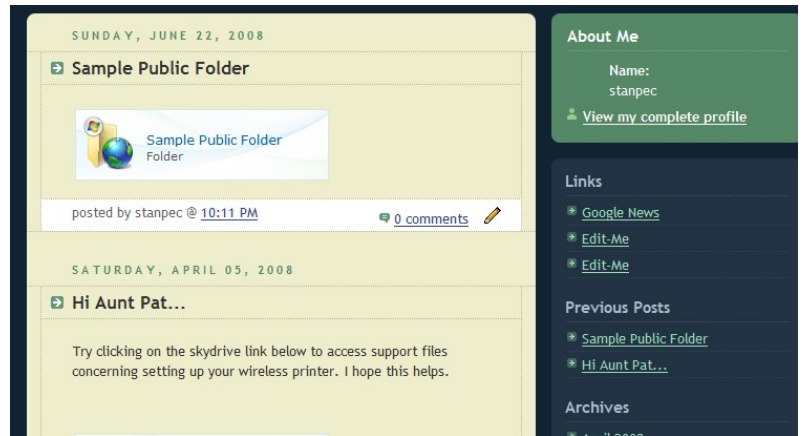
Here the code (generated by Microsoft, not us) is pasted into the "EDIT HTML" window of Blogger. This is important. If you use the "Compose" window that we are all used to working in, the program will not know what to do with the code.

Once done, just publish post and view the blog.



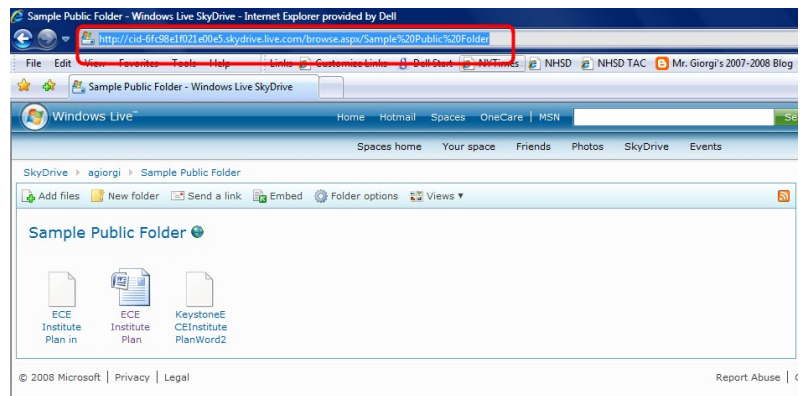
Successfully published folder

The folder can now be clicked by anyone visiting the blog and they can get access to the contents.



The most straightforward way...

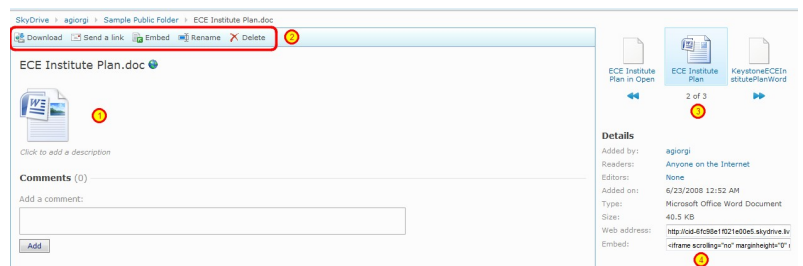
Despite all of these options, remember that you can always copy the link from the web address bar and paste into an email or a blog posting.



Files: Everything you can do to a folder can be done with a file...and more...

Click on any file and you will see:

1. The icon with the file name
2. An easy way to download, send, embed, rename, or delete the file. Basically, everything that we just did with a folder you can now do with a file...any file.
3. The next file and the previous file are only one click away
4. Details, which include embed code and a link that you can email or paste



into any document (for example, a Google document that serves as a class schedule can now have links to all the assignments. As a teacher I have done nothing more than make a backup copy of my files in Microsoft's cloud, but I also have a whole new way to share information with the students)

Live Mesh

Live Mesh is a new technology Microsoft is pioneering. While it is still in preview, it is worth sharing as it truly is a platform that brings your entire digital life together in one place on the web. In addition, it may be a sneak peak at some of the functionality in Windows 7.



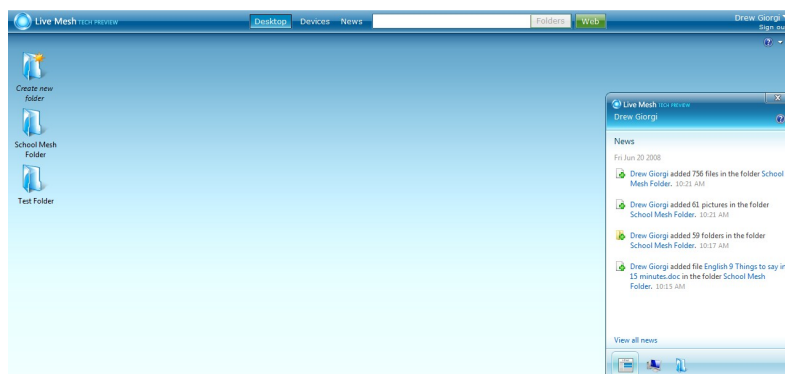
Mesh Devices

Welcome to Microsoft Live Mesh. This is home base where you can see all of your devices in one place. Presently we have the Live Desktop and two PCs that are connected.



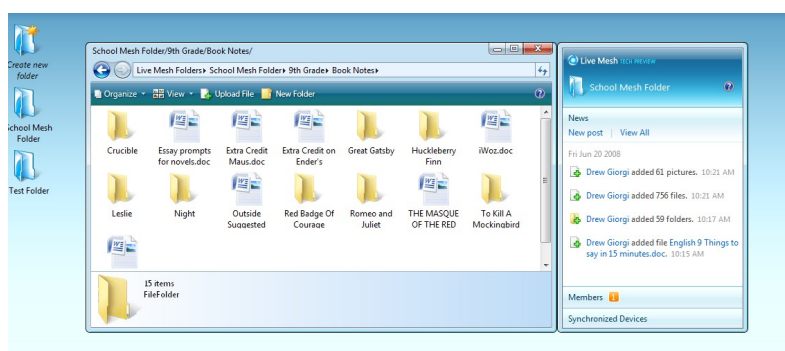
Live Desktop

Live Desktop allows you to sync file folders on your home and office computers with the live desktop. This provides universal access and ensures that the files are always up to date.



Sample Folder View

Sample Folder View. Live Mesh currently gives you 5 Gigabytes of space, just like SkyDrive.



Connecting to a device

In addition to the live desktop, Live Mesh will allow you to connect to and operate a remote computer. In this screen shot, we are going to connect to Jeanne's XP PC.



XP PC Example

Here we have connected to the XP PC. This is a valuable tool since, you can now copy files between the two PCs and you can operate the other PC as if it were right in front of you. So you can retrieve a homework assignment, pull up a PowerPoint presentation to show students, or look at a picture of Brandy the Pug as we are doing here.

Notice also that the folders that are synced to the live desktop (the Test Folder and the School Mesh Folder) are also accessible here.

The point is that Live Mesh makes all of your computers (including Macs soon), Handhelds, and other devices centrally accessible.

